

RESOLUTION

Referred to _____ Comm.

of the

Date _____

CITY OF MINNEAPOLIS

By _____ Council Member Sayles Belton _____

Designating the interior and exterior of The State Theater, One Eighth Street South (aka 805 Hennepin Avenue), for local heritage preservation.

WHEREAS, the Minneapolis Heritage Preservation Commission has recommended to the City Council that the interior and exterior of the State Theater be designated for heritage preservation; and

WHEREAS, prior to such recommendation and in compliance with Title 2, Chapter 34 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances, the Heritage Preservation Commission did refer the subject matter to the City Planning Commission for review and recommendation, and further did refer the subject matter to the Minnesota Historical Society for review and comment, such favorable comment being made on June 18, 1985; and

WHEREAS, the Standing Committee on Zoning and Planning held a public hearing on October 14, 1986, with such due and proper notice as required by Section 34.50 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
MINNEAPOLIS:

That the interior and exterior of The State Theater is hereby designated
for heritage preservation, and that the proper City Officers and the Heritage
Preservation Commission are directed to comply with the provisions of Sections
34.60 through 34.90 of the Minneapolis Code of Ordinances.

RECORD OF COUNCIL VOTE													
Council Member	Aye	Nay	N.V.	Abs.	Ovrd.	Sust.	Council Member	Aye	Nay	N.V.	Abs.	Ovrd.	Sust.
Dziedzic							Scallion						
O'Brien							Niemiec						
							Cramer						
							Schulstad						
							Johnson						
							Pres. Rainville						
X INDICATES VOTE — N.V. - Not Voting Abs. — Absent Ovrd. - Vote to Override Sust. - Vote to Sustain													

PASSED _____ 19 _____

APPROVED _____
NOT APPROVED _____ 19 _____
VETOED _____

ATTEST _____
City Clerk

President of Council

Mayor

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

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National Register of Historic Places
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received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections**1. Name**

historic State Theatre

and/or common State Theatre (aka Jesus People Church)

2. Location

street & number 805 Hennepin Avenue N/A not for publication

city, town Minneapolis N/A vicinity of

state Minnesota code 22 county Hennepin code 053

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name HTPG Associates Ltd.

street & number c/o The Palmer Group of the Twin Cities Ltd., 701 Fourth Avenue South

city, town Minneapolis N/A vicinity of state Minnesota

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Registry of Deeds, Hennepin County Government Center

street & number 300 South Sixth Street

city, town Minneapolis state Minnesota

6. Representation in Existing Surveystitle N/A has this property been determined eligible? ☐ yes ☒ nodate N/A ☐ federal ☐ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records N/A

city, town N/A state N/A

7. Description

to	Condition		Check one	Check one
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved
	<input type="checkbox"/> fair	unexposed		date <u>N/A</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The State Theatre is located at 805 Hennepin Avenue in downtown Minneapolis' central commercial and entertainment district. Constructed in 1920-21, the theatre is centered within the two storey Walker Building and sited in a row of two storey storefronts built between 1919 and 1925.

The two storey theatre has a rectangular shaped plan, 98' x 167', and a reinforced concrete foundation with concrete roof and floor slabs and structural clay tile walls. The entire Hennepin Avenue facade is covered in a white glazed terracotta with elaborate ornamentation in a style its architect, J. E. O. Pridmore of Chicago, described as free Italian Renaissance. The facade is divided into three approximately equal bays, with the marquee running the full width of the building. The first storey includes eight pairs of glass entry doors in wooden frames, with transoms above, recessed 12 feet beneath a coffered barrel vault. The two foot wide central pillars and the engaged side pilasters carry above on each face ornate brackets which appear to support the marquee.

Bays at the second storey level are divided by fluted Renaissance Ionic pilasters. A pair of floor to ceiling windows is centered within each bay and flanked by Renaissance Corinthian pilasters. The entablature above is covered by floral ornament and is capped by a row of rosette and festoon antefixae. Masques of the Muse of drama, aligned with the columns, and a central cartouche extend above the entablature.

The theatre's original marquee, modest in size, was set into the facade of a 60' x 18' steel canopy. A vertical projecting "State" sign was centered above the canopy. In 1929, the canopy was altered to a full rectangular marquee, emblazoned with lights, designed in the Art Deco mode by the Minneapolis architectural firm of Liebenberg and Kaplan. A larger and more elaborate "State" sign was installed above the marquee. In the 1940s, the marquee was altered to a triangular backlit marquee and the "State" sign removed. With the sale of the building to the Jesus People Church in 1978, the marquee was altered once again to the existing triangular backlit marquee, bearing the logo and name of the Jesus People Church. With this exception, the building's exterior retains its design integrity.

The 2400 seat theatre auditorium was designed without loges or boxes with the object of permitting all patrons an unobstructed view, and only a single semi-circular balcony was constructed. The theatre's proscenium (the transverse wall dividing the auditorium from the stage area) spans the full width of the building. The stage's ornate stilted proscenium arch and frontispiece are recessed beneath a curved coffered ceiling. A moveable peristyle unit with an embroidered gold canopy and matching draperies filled the upstage area. The original stage flooring was of glass which permitted direct lighting from underneath. Flanking the proscenium arch, pairs of monumental festooned Renaissance Corinthian pilasters topped by pediments carry three figures of heroic size, representing Music, the Drama, and the Muse of Cinema. Elaborate grilles, partially concealed by draperies, which served a Wurlitzer theatre

(see continuation sheet)

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organ now removed are centered above mock balconets between the pilasters. The total composition is set within a monumental molded plaster arch, with a central cartouche, that defines the proscenium's perimeter.

Enameled wooden balustrades around the orchestra pit and its flanking stairs leading to the stage were removed in 1927 during alterations to the pit and stage. The pit and stairs are now covered by a multi-stepped wooden platform unit which serves as an extension of the stage floor.

The six original crystal chandeliers remain suspended from the coffered ceiling in the auditorium; the stained glass exit signs and tulip-shaped wall sconces have been removed. The balcony shelf's facade retains its original molded plaster cherubs and festoons. The statuary set into niches along the auditorium walls has been temporarily screened for the building's use as a church. The original murals of bountiful nudes on the auditorium walls have been covered by paint.

The foyer and lobby areas retain their original black and white marble floors, molded plaster coffered ceilings, pillars and pilasters, crystal chandeliers, and decorative wrought iron railings at the balcony level. Paintings on the foyer walls at the balcony level have been temporarily screened.

The women's restroom at the basement level has the original lavender-colored fixtures and ceramic floor and wall tiles, and the adjacent men's restroom retains the original parrot green fixtures and ceramic tiles. The adjoining lounge area, remodeled in 1929 by Liebenberg and Kaplan, features Byzantine rope columns, a fireplace, and full-length mirrors recessed behind Moorish arches. Storage and rehearsal and dressing rooms for performers are also located in the basement along with mechanical systems and the popcorn room.

Although the theatre's original polychrome color scheme has been covered by several layers of paint, the building's major interior architectural design elements remain intact and in excellent condition.

The backstage area, unused for theatrical productions for almost ten years, is in good condition. At the top of the space above the proscenium is the gridiron, a steel framework of open beams placed below the roof. From this frame all hanging scenery was suspended on a counterweight system into the fly loft, an open area above the proscenium opening, until it was lowered into place onstage. The pinrail, where ropes controlling the hanging scenery were tied off, has been moved from its original site on the fly gallery forty feet above stage level to the stage floor offstage right.

The State's original free-standing cast iron, brass and granite ticket booth is now displayed in the lobby of the Hennepin Center for the Arts Building (formerly the Masonic Temple, N. R. 1975) on Hennepin Avenue two blocks north of the theatre. The arts organization purchased the massive 3,500 pound artifact from a local interior design firm in 1979 for \$5,000.00.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering HVAC	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1920-21

Builder/Architect J. E. O. Pridmore

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Liebenberg & Kaplan, 1929 alterations

The State Theatre is architecturally significant for its heavily ornamented glazed terracotta facade, exemplified in a style its architect, J. E. O. Pridmore of Chicago, described as free Italian Renaissance,¹ and for its opulent interior design which includes elements from the Italian Renaissance, Moorish, and Byzantine Revival modes. Both the exterior design and the ornamentation of the interior of the State, constructed in 1920-21, combined to create a feeling of luxury and splendor compatible with the glamour projected by the Hollywood films of the 1920s. The State is a well-preserved and architecturally impressive example of its style and historically important as a representative theatre from an era when movies cost a quarter and the theatres alone were often worth the price of admission.

The 2400 seat structure, designed as a multi-purpose entertainment house, is also important for the technological advances incorporated in its original construction. The \$1-million theatre had the first rudimentary air-conditioning system in Minneapolis -- pumps, pipes, and vents that delivered cool air from an artesian well 840 feet underground, keeping the temperature at a constant 72 degrees. This system is still in excellent condition and continues to ventilate and cool the theatre. The original stage flooring was of glass which permitted direct lighting from underneath; for spectacular and ballet productions the performers appeared as if floating in a sea of colored illumination. The stage was designed to allow modification within a few hours for any type of performance, and an auxiliary stage floor could be extended over the orchestra pit to give the theatre the deepest stage in the northwest.²

The State remained in nearly continuous use from its opening on February 5, 1921, presenting films, vaudeville acts, concerts, ballets and Broadway touring productions until the last film was shown on December 31, 1975. In 1976, the State reopened briefly for a series of music and dance programs presented by the Walker Art Center. The theatre occupies the former site of the mansion of T. B. Walker, a local lumber tycoon, real estate magnate and patron of the arts. Walker began the city's first art gallery in one wing of his home and was a partner in the Walker-Burton Company which built the Shubert Theatre (now Academy) in 1910 in downtown Minneapolis. The State Theatre continued to be a part of the Walker family's real estate holdings until its sale to the Jesus People Church in 1978.

The architect, J. E. O. Pridmore, was born in Edbastion, England, and educated at Greenhill College, Birmingham. Pridmore emigrated to America in 1880 and

"Trip 'Behind Scenes' At New State Theatre Reveals Mechanical Wonders of Movies," Minneapolis Journal, February 13, 1921.

² Ibid.

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three years later established an architectural practice in Chicago that was to continue for fifty years. Although he designed a variety of commercial buildings, Pridmore was best known for his theatres and churches. Noted examples of the former in Chicago are the Cort (razed) (1909), the Victoria Theatre Company (1912), the Sheridan (1927), and the Nortown (1931). Pridmore's design for the Cort featured the nation's first atmospheric theatre auditorium, creating an illusionary setting of a warm summer sky above an Italian garden. For the Nortown, Pridmore produced an atmospheric seafaring townscape. Prows guided by seahorses protrude from organ screens, a lighthouse illuminates one wall, and painted Spanish galleons circumnavigate the auditorium.³

Although Pridmore's design for the State did not present such extreme escapist appeal, the auditorium's polychrome color scheme, monumental Corinthian pilasters, embroidered gold draperies, crystal chandeliers suspended from a coffered ceiling, and statuary set into niches along the walls provided a sumptuous setting for viewing the latest attractions from Hollywood and Broadway. In the 1920s, theatres were more than just the primary source of entertainment; they were local gathering spots and the center of downtown nightlife throughout America. A ticket to a show was a passport to experiences otherwise beyond reach, and no entertainment had ever been as accessible or as popular.⁴

Four theatres constructed in downtown Minneapolis during the golden age of the showplace are still existent. The Shubert (now Academy) sited approximately a block and a half northwest of the State on North Seventh Street, retains its Beaux Arts glazed terracotta facade. However, alterations to the interior in 1957 stripped the auditorium walls of their original molded plaster design elements, which repeated the paired Ionic pilasters of the primary facade, destroyed the boxes, and removed the molded plaster trim from the proscenium arch and ceiling. The Shubert's street level lobby has been remodeled three times. The Hennepin Orpheum (1921), built as a vaudeville house and located one block south of the State, has lost much of its interior molded plaster trim through deterioration and alterations, and the lobby area has been remodeled on four occasions. In 1979, the first storey return of the Orpheum's primary facade was covered with ceramic tile. The Pantages (now Mann) (1916), also constructed as a vaudeville house, is sited one block north of the State. Extensive alterations to the structure's primary facade and to the interior have removed all of the theatre's original architectural design elements. The State Theatre is the last remaining intact example in Minneapolis of theatre' Belle Epoque and the White Way that once lined Hennepin Avenue. It is worthy of preservation and recognition.

³David Naylor. American Picture Palaces: The Architecture of Fantasy. New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold Co., 1981.

⁴Ibid.

9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet page 3

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property Less than one acre

Quadrangle name Minneapolis South

Quadrangle scale 7.5' Series

UTM References

A

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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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E

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F

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G

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H

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Verbal boundary description and justification

Lots 1 and 2 Auditor's Subdivision No, 130

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

Form Prepared By

name/title Muriel Nord and Barbara Applebaum

organization City of Minneapolis

Heritage Preservation Commission

date February 25, 1985

street & number 210 City Hall

telephone 612-348-6538

city or town Minneapolis

state Minnesota

State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

☐ national ☐ state ☒ local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature

title Russell W. Fridley
State Historic Preservation Officer

date

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

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Marquis, Albert Nelson. The Book of Chicagoans: A Biographical Dictionary of Living Leading Men of the City of Chicago. Chicago: A. N. Marquis Co., 1911.

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Withey, Henry F. and Elsie Rathburn Withey. Biographical Dictionary of American Architects (Deceased). Los Angeles: Hennessey & Ingalls, Inc. 1970.

"Police Reserves Called At Opening of State Theatre, Motion Picture House Called Most Elaborate Between Chicago and Coast," Minneapolis Journal, February 6, 1921.

"Trip "Behind Scenes" At New State Theatre Reveals Mechanical Wonders of Movies," Minneapolis Journal, February 13, 1921.

"A Fine State of Affairs," Minneapolis Star, December 18, 1970.

"A Remnant of City's Belle Epoque," Minneapolis Tribune, December 28, 1975.

"Jesus People Will Buy State Theatre, Nearby Buildings," Minneapolis Star, November 16, 1978.

Building permit records. Department of Inspections, Minneapolis

Registry of Deeds, Hennepin County Government Center, Minneapolis

Original plans for the State Theatre in blueprint format, Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota, St. Paul.

Architectural drawings for revisions to the State Theatre, Liebenberg & Kaplan Collection, Northwest Architectural Archives, University of Minnesota, St. Paul

Telephone interview with Peter Knapp, Manager, Hennepin Center for the Arts November 16, 1984.